Preventing Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of People with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

Talk About Sexual Violence
Project Staff

Healthy Brain Initiative Webinar
March 22, 2022
2:00 pm ET
The Arc of the United States

• Mission

To promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively support their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

• Policy, program, and legal advocacy

• 600+ chapters across the country
National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability (NCCJD)

- Created in 2013 with support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
- Advocate at the intersection of criminal justice reform and the advancement of disability rights
  - Work on both victim/witness issues and on issues facing those who are charged with crimes
- Portfolio of five projects and other contracts totaling over $500k
- Support people with IDD and chapter network to lead this work
Training and technical assistance
- Pathways to Justice®
  www.nccjdpathwaystojustice.org
- Community-based program that creates Disability Response Teams (or DRTs)

Information and referral
- For people with disabilities and their families as well as criminal justice and allied professionals
  https://thearc.org/our-initiatives/criminal-justice/

Resource collection and creation
- Policy briefs, fact sheets, other publications

Education
- Social media, webinars, and conferences
NCCJD Resources on Victimization

• Training and technical assistance
  — Including Pathways to Justice® trainings and creating Disability Response Teams)

• Publications
  — White paper on victimization, fact sheets, etc.

• Projects with focus on outreach to victims
  — Talk About Sexual Violence, Know Your Rights series
Pathways to Justice®

**Pathways Principles:**
- Nothing about us, without us
- Community-based
- Multidisciplinary
- Relationship-oriented

**STEP 1:** Disability Response Team (DRT)

**STEP 2:** Training for Justice Professionals

**STEP 3:** Ongoing Technical Assistance

The Arc of New Jersey Pilot Pathways to Justice (2015)
NCCJD’s Projects & Initiatives

- **BJA: Serving Safely** – A National Training & TA Center for Law Enforcement on MH and I/DD
- **OVC: Healing Crime Victims with Disabilities (on-line toolkit)**
- **WITH Foundation: Talk About Sexual Violence (focus on males)**
- Kessler Foundation: JusticeWorks (training)
- **People with Disabilities Foundation (Know Your Rights series)**
- Open Society Foundations (international knowledge hub)
- Small contracts with OVC and Council of State Governments
- COPS Office within DOJ (videos), **Natl Coalition for Sexual Health**, and Natl Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, LRIDD.org
Victims

People with intellectual disability are 7x more likely to experience sexual assault than those without disabilities.

Source: NCR

Individuals with cognitive disabilities* face the highest rates of violent victimization.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

*Cognitive disabilities include Down syndrome, autism, dementia, learning disabilities, intellectual disability, and traumatic brain injury.

Barriers to Justice

- Reports of victimization are not believed
- Cases may go unpunished, especially if there are communication challenges
- Inaccessible services and supports
A Note on Intersectionality

Queer women with disabilities v. all queer women who experience domestic abuse

Men of color with disabilities v. white men with disabilities arrested by 28
Violence Takes Many Forms

- Neglect
- Emotional
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Bullying & cyberbullying

31 year-old Carl DeBrodie disappeared from his Independent supported living home in April 2017. Days later his body was found encased in concrete at a Fulton storage unit.
Disabilities

Physical

Brain-Based

Mental Illness

Dual Diagnosis

Developmental

Paralysis

Orthopedic impairment

Blind or low vision

Deaf or hard of hearing

Heart Disease

Schizophrenia

Bipolar disorder

Depression

Learning Disabilities

Intellectual Disabilities

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs)

And others...
Challenges for IDD, TBI or Aging Community in Addressing Violence

• Victim service providers don’t know about the issue, or understand how critical it is, or how to connect to disability organizations
• Different cultures and terminology than anti-violence or sexual assault organizations
• Lack of opportunity to work together, co-train, and learn from each other
• Few funding streams or opportunities
Elder Abuse Research

• *Abuse in the community*
  – A meta-analysis study found that 1 in 6 elders, or 15.7%, in the community experienced some form of abuse in the past year (2017)
  – A more recent study on abuse of older women found that 1 in 6 experienced abuse in the prior year (2019)

• *Abuse in institutions*
  – Fewer studies but those conducted show high levels of abuse (psychological – 33.4%, physical – 14.1%, financial – 13.8%, neglect 11.6% and sexual abuse – 1.9%) (2019)

Violence & Disability/Elder Population

- **Unique challenges**: Know the unique challenges people with disabilities face throughout the system.

- **One size does not fit all**: Knowing one person with a disability means you know **ONE PERSON with a disability**.

- **Safety for all**: Disability is a human rights issue just like race, gender identity, and religion.

*The Arc* – National Center on Criminal Justice & Disability

*Achieve with us.*
Considerations for Victims

• Heightened risk and lack of education about that risk
• Ability or decision to report (issues with mandatory reporting)
• Professionals’ receipt of the report (credibility issues)
• Medical treatment (what is available/accessible?)
• Access to advocates (peer and otherwise)
• Lack of inclusive and accessible crime victim or healing services
People with intellectual and developmental disabilities deserve a life free from abuse. Sexual violence is too often ignored or excused.

Join the conversation, talk about sexual violence and end the silent epidemic of abuse!
NPR’s Abused & Betrayed Series

The rate of rape and sexual assault against people with intellectual disability is more than seven times the rate for people without disabilities.

Image: Three pictures of people with disabilities whose stories were shared in NPR’s Abused and Betrayed series.
• At least 1 in 6 men have been sexually assaulted
• PSA - first time included a man with disabilities
• Over 4 million views to date
• [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2p06x-yumc0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2p06x-yumc0)

Image: Picture of man (James Meadors) shaking hands with woman who just read his story about surviving sexual assault for the first time. Both are sitting on stools and smiling.
Talk about Sexual Violence
How to Have the Conversation with Health Care Providers

Look for signs of sexual assault

talkaboutsexualviolence.org
Stronger Together & The National Peer Support Project

• Created in 2019 through support from Massachusetts-based Building Partnerships for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities Initiative (BPI)

• Mission: Address sexual violence against persons with disabilities on a national scale through active collaboration self-advocate survivors, federal and state agencies, and other partner organizations

The Arc

National Center on Criminal Justice & Disability

Achieve with us.
Taking the Next Step

• Break out of the disability bubble & partner with victim advocates and agencies whenever possible
• Apply the lens of intersectionality
• Support self-advocates as leaders in movements to end all forms of violence
• Be innovative when equipping the victim advocacy community to help victims with IDD
What You Can Do

• Think about your own journey and the champions for justice who’ve inspired you

• Support research, policy and programs that seek to make lasting change

• Build strong collaborations with partners at the community, national and international level

• Stay informed and be proactive!
Talk About Sexual Violence Team

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• Learn More About *Pathways to Justice*®
  www.nccjdpathwaystojustice.org

• Visit NCCJD® online
  www.thearc.org/NCCJD